

helping us to meet life's challenges and achieve our dreams. Mothers—whether biological or adoptive, foster or stepmothers—are the cornerstones of our families, and our families are the foundation of our Nation. Mothers are the bridges that link America's best promise to its brightest reality.

The role of women has changed dramatically in the last half-century, bringing exciting new opportunities as well as fresh challenges. Today, our mothers can be mayors and managers, heads of households and homemakers—yet they still make us the center of their lives and the focus of their love. Regardless of whether they work inside or outside the home, we still turn to our mothers when we need reassurance, advice, or comfort. Devotion and love, loyalty and selflessness—these are the traits that define motherhood.

For 85 years, we have reserved the second Sunday in May as a special day to honor our mothers for their strength, nobility, and generosity. In so many ways, we owe our successes—and those of our Nation—to the loving influence of our mothers. Although we can never repay them for their gift of life and love, we can honor them in person or cherish their beloved memory. The Congress, by a joint resolution approved May 8, 1914 (38 Stat. 770), has designated the second Sunday in May of each year as "Mother's Day" and requested the President to call for its appropriate observance.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 9, 1999, as Mother's Day. I urge all Americans to express their love and appreciation for their mothers on this day and every day and to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 10, 1999]

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Proclamation 7193—National Day of Prayer, 1999

May 5, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

From our earliest days, whether in times of joy or of challenge, Americans have raised their hearts and voices in prayer. On the Great Plains, American Indians prayed for peace and for blessings upon their children and their friends. The Pilgrims prayed from the moment they first set foot on this continent. Our Nation's founders prayed as they forged a democracy based on freedom and respect for human rights. Our military leaders and the millions of men and women who have served in our Armed Forces have prayed in the midst of every conflict in which our Nation has fought. And so it continues to this day, as Americans of every race, background, and creed pray in churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, and their own homes for guidance, wisdom, and courage in confronting the challenges before us.

We can pray openly thanks to the religious freedom guaranteed for us by the First Amendment to the Constitution. That freedom and the diversity of faiths it has fostered are among America's most important achievements. They have made our Nation a beacon for generations of people from around the world who have traveled here seeking to worship according to their conscience without fear of coercion or constraint.

On this National Day of Prayer, observed so soon after the tragedy in Littleton, Colorado, and the tornadoes that devastated communities in Kansas, Texas, and Oklahoma, we are more keenly aware than ever of the power and solace we find in prayer. Throughout the days that have followed the deaths of and injury to so many of our fellow citizens, Americans have united in prayer for those who died or were harmed, for the comfort and peace of their families, for the wisdom to heal our society, and for the strength to overcome such tragedies. For as Martin Luther King, Jr., so eloquently said, "When our days become dreary with low-hovering

clouds of despair, and when our nights become darker than a thousand midnights, let us remember that there is a creative force in this universe . . . a power that is able to make a way out of no way and transform dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows.”

The Congress, by Public Law 100–307, has called on our citizens to reaffirm the role of prayer in our society and to honor the religious diversity our freedom permits by recognizing annually a “National Day of Prayer.”

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 6, 1999, as a National Day of Prayer. I encourage the citizens of this great Nation to pray, each in his or her own manner, seeking strength from God to face the problems of today, requesting guidance for the uncertainties of tomorrow, and giving thanks for the rich blessings that our country has enjoyed throughout its history.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

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Interview With Tom Brokaw of the National Broadcasting Corporation Aboard Air Force One May 4, 1999

Russian Peace Initiative

Tom Brokaw. Mr. President, diplomatic flurry may be an overstatement—there’s something percolating, obviously. Is there anything that you find encouraging at all in what we’ve seen in the last couple of days with the Russian connection?

The President. Yes. I am encouraged because, first of all, I think it’s a good thing for the Russians to be aggressively involved in trying to find a diplomatic solution, as long as it’s a real solution to the problem. The

conditions that we and our NATO Allies have laid out are not designed to win some victory over Serbia; they’re designed to establish the minimum necessary for the mission to succeed, for the Kosovars to go home to live in security and autonomy.

To do that, you’ve got to get the Serb forces out, and you have to have an international force there with NATO at its core, so it will work, so the Serbs will come back, so the armed elements within the Kosovar Albanians—excuse me, so the Albanians will come back, the Kosovars will come back—and so the armed elements there will disarm and will accept the peace.

Now, that’s what’s necessary to happen. And I think if the Russians get to the point where they can truly embrace that position and argue it to the Serbs, I think that will be very helpful.

Mr. Brokaw. But does Chernomyrdin buy your scenario?

The President. Well, what he’s tried to do, obviously, is to assess what he thinks Mr. Milosevic will buy. But there’s a subtext here I think is important to get out, too, which is this shows that the Russians are more than willing, themselves, to be involved in a peace-keeping force, and that others coming out of that neck of the woods who share religious and ethnic ties to the Serbs may be willing to participate, as well, which will give the right feel and look and substance to this.

You know, I’ve always said we would only go in there if we were permitted to protect the Serb minority, as well as the Kosovar Albanians. So I think that this is basically helpful. But I don’t want to oversell it because there’s been no kind of diplomatic breakthrough here. It cannot be a bad thing to have a man of Mr. Chernomyrdin’s stature, his obvious closeness to President Yeltsin, vigorously doing what he’s doing out there. I think that’s important.

Mr. Brokaw. But there’s not even a small light at the end of the tunnel at this point?

The President. I wouldn’t say that. I think the Russians have a much clearer understanding of why we have taken the position we have taken. And as they’ve gotten into the details of it, I think they understand what it would take actually to have this work. As I said to Mr. Chernomyrdin, I said, “You